



October 22, 1999

Office of Defects Investigation, Room 5326
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh St., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Attn: Jonathan D. White

Subject: Information Report, FL-246

In accordance with Title 49, Part 573, Freightliner Corporation herewith submits an Information report for a new recall campaign to recall Freightliner trucks for a defect in vehicles equipped with preset grease type front hubs.

Sincerely,

Gary W. Rossow

Cc: Michael Mason, CAL-OSHA

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OFFICE
DEFECTS INVESTIGATION

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Section 573.5 Defect Information Report

Date: October 22, 1999

(c) (1) Manufacturer: FREIGHTLINER CORPORATION
P.O. BOX 3849
Portland, Oregon 97208
(503) 735-8078

(c) (2) Vehicles Identification:

- (ii) Model(s) affected: Century Class, Argosy, FLD and FLN models
Manufacture Dates: October 1998 through approximately 10/18/99
Basis for determining population: The first and last vehicles built within the build date range.
- (iv) Component manufacturers if other than the vehicle manufacturer:
Con-Met (hub), Chicago Rawhide (cap and vent)

(c) (3) Total number of vehicles potentially affected: Approximately 2976

(c) (4) Percentage of vehicles estimated to contain the defect: 100%

(c) (5) Description of the defect: The outboard bearing on the steer axle hubs may fail due to water intrusion through a hubcap vent which can result in a separation of the wheel.

(c) (6) Chronology of principal events (defect only): During August and September 1999, Freightliner received 8 reports of front axle hub bearing failures. An investigation was initiated. A meeting was held with the hub manufacturer on September 24, 1999. They initially reported that no problems were found with 20 removed hubs and an inspection of failed parts did not indicate the cause.

On October 15, 1999, the hub manufacturer's inspection results of failed hubs and test data were reviewed. All occurrences involved a failure of the outboard bearing. The hub manufacturer attributed the bearing failure to water entering the hub cavity and contaminating the bearing grease.

On October 21, 1999, the hub manufacturer reported the results of tests showing that water intrusion occurred when pressure washing the hubcap.

The decision to recall the affected vehicles was made.

(c) (7) Noncompliance test data: N/A

(c) (8)(i) Remedial program: Repairs will be performed by Freightliner dealerships and Direct Warranty customers, i.e., customers approved by Freightliner to do their own warranty repairs.

(li) **Estimated Owner Notification Date:** Customer notification will be by first class mail using Freightliner records to determine the customers affected. This will be completed approximately 12/1/99.

Remedy: Remove the hubcap. Inspect for water intrusion and corrosion.
Replace the hub and bearing assembly if there is evidence of corrosion.
Replace the hubcap with a non-vented hubcap on all units inspected.

(c) (9) **Communications sent to dealers and owners:** Copies will be submitted as a supplemental report when available.

(c) (10) **Copy of proposed owner notification letter:** A draft will be sent for ODI review when available.

(c) (11) **Manufacturer's campaign number:** FL-246